Dragonfly Tea: History, Organic Teas and Rooibos

From the teas.co.uk wiki

> **Dragonfly, in brief:** Dragonfly is a family-run British organic tea brand from the Ginsberg family, who first packed rooibos as a tea more than a century ago. The range centres on organic rooibos, green tea and herbal infusions. The plain deep dive.

Last reviewed by the teas.co.uk team in September 2026.

Dragonfly Tea is a family-run British organic tea company, and the family behind it helped put rooibos in the teacup. Its founder, Bruce Ginsberg, is the grandson of Benjamin Ginsberg, the first person to pack rooibos and sell it as a tea, in South Africa in the early 1900s. Bruce himself introduced rooibos to British tea drinkers in 1976. Today the range centres on certified organic tea: rooibos, green tea and simple herbal infusions.

This guide covers where Dragonfly comes from, what the range contains, what the tea bags are made of, and how to brew it. For the founder's own story, see our page on Bruce Ginsberg.

The Dragonfly Tea history

The Dragonfly story starts more than a century ago in the Cederberg mountains of South Africa, where rooibos grows wild. Benjamin Ginsberg had lived in Russia with an uncle in the tea trade, and from 1904 he turned that knowledge to the local plant: he packed it and sold it as a tea of consistent quality, and experimented with old Chinese curing methods to process the leaf.

His grandson Bruce brought the family trade to Britain. In 1976 he came to England to open the British market for rooibos, and he is credited as the first to introduce it to British tea drinkers. He went on to found Dragonfly Tea and its sister brand, Tick Tock, and Dragonfly is still a family business: his daughter Georgia has joined it.

Key dates:

- **1904:** Benjamin Ginsberg begins packing and selling rooibos as a tea in South Africa
- **1976:** Bruce Ginsberg introduces rooibos to British tea drinkers
- **2021:** rooibos becomes a Protected Designation of Origin in the EU
- **Today:** Dragonfly is still a Ginsberg family business, with a certified organic range

The organic and ethical positioning

Every Dragonfly tea on our shelf is certified organic, and the recipes are kept simple: a pure rooibos, a plain green tea, and short ingredient lists on the blends. That simplicity is the brand's real appeal, and it is easy to check, because the ingredients are printed on every pack.

Dragonfly's rooibos also comes from the only corner of the world where the plant grows commercially. Since 2021 rooibos has been a Protected Designation of Origin in the EU, which ties the name to the Cederberg and the neighbouring districts of South Africa's Western and Northern Cape.

The Dragonfly range

On our shelf the range falls into four groups: rooibos in several styles, from pure to vanilla, Earl Grey and chai; a plain organic green tea; mint teas; and gentle caffeine-free herbal blends for the evening. The live list, with prices and stock, is further down this page.

For wider category context see the rooibos overview, the green tea overview and the herbal tea overview.

The rooibos focus

Rooibos is the heart of Dragonfly, which makes sense given the family history. It is naturally caffeine-free and forgiving to brew: it does not turn bitter if the bag stays in, which makes it the easy evening cup. The pure rooibos is the one to start with, and the Earl Grey rooibos is a good caffeine-free swap for an evening Earl Grey. See the rooibos vs redbush comparison for the naming question.

What the tea bags are made of

This is where a lot of tea writing goes wrong, so here is exactly what Dragonfly says. Its tea bag paper is sealed with PLA, a plant-based polymer, for industrial composting, and the inner pouch that keeps each bag fresh is foil that contains plastic. So the bags are not plastic-free in the strict sense, and a home compost heap is not the right place for them. Check the pack and your local council's guidance before you throw them away. Our plastic-free tea bags guide compares what the main brands say.

Dragonfly vs the competition

- **vs Pukka:** both are organic herbal brands; Pukka is bigger and more blend-led, while Dragonfly leans on rooibos and simple infusions
- **vs Clipper:** both carry organic credentials; Clipper is built around everyday black tea, while Dragonfly is infusion-led
- **vs supermarket own-label organic:** own-label is usually cheaper; Dragonfly gives you a family brand with a real rooibos history and more rooibos styles to choose from

How to brew Dragonfly properly

- **Rooibos:** freshly boiled water, 5 to 7 minutes; it does not go bitter with a longer brew
- **Green tea:** water at 70 to 80°C, 2 to 3 minutes
- **Mint and herbal infusions:** freshly boiled water, at least 5 minutes for full flavour

The pack carries the brand's own brewing guide for each blend. For the family by family temperature detail see the water temperatures guide.

What we stock

Browse the full Dragonfly range. The most bought Dragonfly products on teas.co.uk:

- Dragonfly Organic Lively Lemon and Ginger, 20 Tea Bags 34g
- Dragonfly Organic Cape Chai Rooibos, 40 Tea Bags 80g
- Dragonfly Organic Vanilla Rooibos, 40 Tea Bags 100g
- Dragonfly Organic Pure Rooibos, 40 Tea Bags 100g
- Dragonfly Organic Moroccan Mint, 40 Tea Bags 80g
- Dragonfly Organic Night Sky Calm, 20 Tea Bags 30g

For comparisons across the wider organic and herbal landscape, see also: Pukka, Clipper, Teapigs, Heath & Heather, Twinings.

The verdict on Dragonfly

Dragonfly is a family-run British organic tea brand with a better origin story than most: the Ginsberg family first packed rooibos as a tea more than a century ago, and Bruce Ginsberg brought it to Britain in 1976. The range is organic, the recipes are simple, and the rooibos is the reason to buy it.

Start with the pure rooibos. If you want a bigger herbal range with more blends, Pukka is the obvious alternative; if you want organic everyday black tea, Clipper is the better fit.

For the wider context see the rooibos overview, the black tea overview, the herbal tea overview, the rooibos vs redbush comparison, the Pukka deep dive, the Clipper deep dive, and the Teapigs deep dive.

Dragonfly at a glance

Aspect	Dragonfly	The plain read
Centre of range	Organic rooibos, green tea and herbal infusions	Infusion-led, not a black-tea house
Tea bags	Paper sealed with PLA, a plant-based polymer	For industrial composting; the foil pouch contains plastic
Positioning	Organic and family-run	Competes on provenance and simple recipes, not price
Best use	Caffeine-free everyday and evening cups	Strong fit for the rooibos and herbal slots

FROM THE CURATOR

teas · The way you infuse it matters more than who stocks it. A careful steep of an everyday Dragonfly bag can beat a careless one of something pricier.

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